

REMARKS

Claims 45 and 46 have been cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer of the subject matter recited therein. Claims 1-4, 6-35, 37-44 and 47-63 are pending. Claims 13-16, 23-28, 43, 44 and 47-63 are withdrawn from consideration. Claims 1, 29, 38, 43 and 47 are the independent claims. No new matter is presented and entry and reconsideration are respectfully requested.

ALLOWABLE SUBJECT MATTER:

Claims 5-6, 21-22, 36-37 and 39 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

ADVISORY ACTION:

In the Advisory Office Action mailed November 22, 2006, it is noted that the proposed amendment after the Final Rejection filed on November 2, 2006 would not be entered for it raised new issues that would require further consideration and/or search. It is noted that the independent claims were amended to incorporate the allowable subject matter and therefore did not raise new issues. Nevertheless, Applicants hereby enclose a Request for Continued Examination to have the claims considered. Furthermore, Applicants have cancelled withdrawn claims 45 and 46 without prejudice or disclaimer of the subject matter recited therein.

REJECTIONS UNDER 35 U.S.C. §102:

Claims 1-4, 7-8, 38, 40-42 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Arai '043 et al. (JP Patent 10-189043, abstract).

Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection for at least the following reasons.

Regarding independent claim 1, it is noted that claim 1 has been amended to incorporate the allowable subject matter of claim 5. Therefore, claim 1 is in condition for allowance and Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of independent claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) be withdrawn.

Furthermore, it is noted that claims 2-4 and 7-8 are also allowable, at least because of their dependence from claim 1 and because they include additional features not taught or suggested by the prior art. Therefore, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of claims 2-4 and 7-8 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) be withdrawn.

Regarding independent claim 38, it is noted that claim 38 has been amended to incorporate the allowable subject matter of claim 5. Therefore, claim 38 is also in condition for allowance and Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of independent claim 38 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) be withdrawn.

Furthermore, claims 40-42 are also allowable, at least because of their dependence from claim 38 and because they include additional features not taught or suggested by the prior art.

REJECTIONS UNDER 35 U.S.C. §103:

Claims 1-4, 7-12, 17-20, 29-30, 32-35 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Xu et al. (U.S. Patent 6,743,947) in view of Arai '293 et al. (U.S. Patent 6,495,293).

Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection for at least the following reasons.

Regarding independent claim 1, it is noted that claim 1 has been amended to incorporate the allowable subject matter of claim 5. Therefore, claim 1 is in condition for allowance and Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of independent claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) be withdrawn.

Furthermore, claims 2-4, 7-12 and 17-20 are also allowable, at least because of their dependence from claim 1 and because they include additional features not taught or suggested by the prior art.

Regarding independent claim 29, it is noted that claim 29 has been amended to incorporate the allowable subject matter of claim 36. Therefore, claim 29 is in condition for allowance and Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of independent claim 29 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) be withdrawn.

Furthermore, claims 30 and 32-35 are also allowable, at least because of their dependence from claim 29 and because they include additional features not taught or suggested by the prior art.

CONCLUSION:

In accordance with the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that all outstanding rejections have been overcome and/or rendered moot. And further, that all pending claims patentably distinguish over the prior art. There being no further outstanding rejections, the application is submitted as being in condition for allowance which action is earnestly solicited.

If there are any additional fees associated with filing of this Preliminary Amendment, please charge the same to our Deposit Account No. 50-3333.

Respectfully submitted,

STEIN, MCEWEN & BUI, LLP

Date: 12/4/06

By: Douglas X. Rodríguez
Douglas X. Rodríguez
Registration No. 47,269

1400 Eye Street, NW
Suite 300
Washington, D.C. 20005
Telephone: (202) 216-9505
Facsimile: (202) 216-9510